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ASSASSIN'S CREED VALHALLA

ISSUE
#1



FORGOTTEN MYTHS

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MICHAEL ATIYEH



ASSASSIN'S CREED

VALHALLA

FORGOTTEN MYTHS
ISSUE 1

IN THIS PREQUEL

to *Assassin's Creed Valhalla: Dawn of Ragnarök*, war threatens to tear apart the nine realms, and the young god of light, Baldr, makes it his quest to save everyone.

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"THIS IS A TALE OF GODS
AND THEIR SCHEMING; OF
MURDER AND LOVE
UNREQUITED; OF A CLASH
AMONG THE NINE REALMS.

"IT IS A TALE MOST ASSUREDLY
FULL OF LIES. CAN YOU DIVINE
THEM FROM THE TRUTH?"

"LET US BEGIN WITH THREE
ÆSIR WARRIORS, EACH
PEERLESS IN HIS ART,
HUNTING FAR FROM HOME.

"THEIR QUARRY WAS CORNERED
AND THOROUGHLY ENRAGED."

FORWARD,
BROTHERS!

TO FIND A MUSPEL
IN THESE LANDS--
SOMETHING IS
GRAVELY
WRONG.

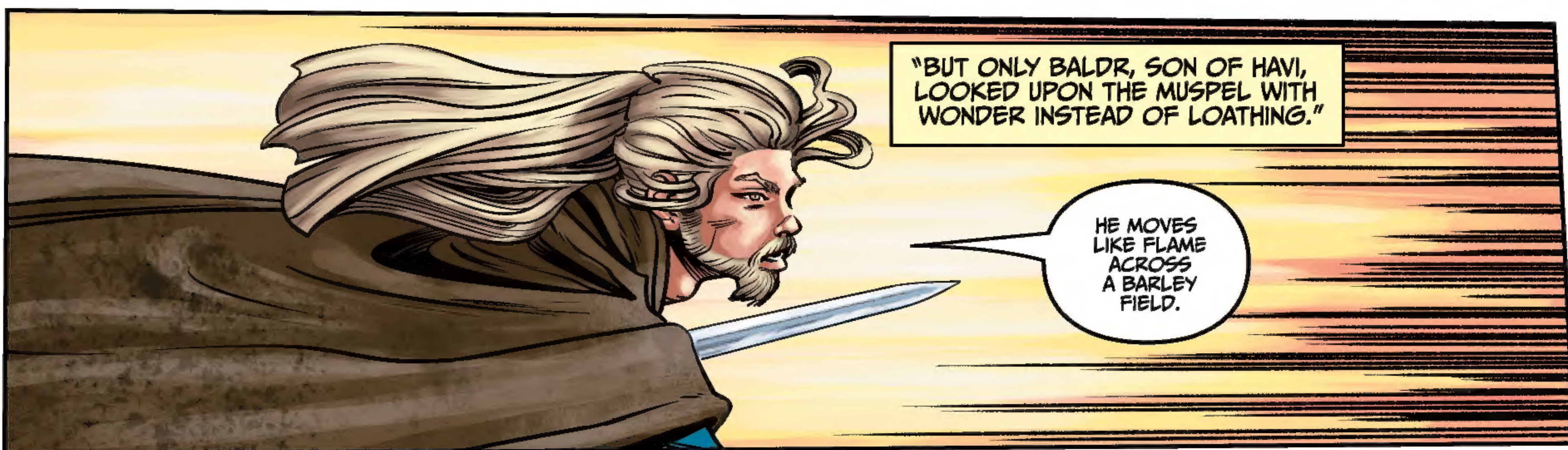
TO FIND
A BATTLE
SO GRAND?
SOMETHING IS
ASSUREDLY
RIGHT!

"HEIMDALL THE WATCHMAN HAD SERVED
AS THEIR TRACKER, FOLLOWING THE
SCENT OF OAK CINDERS FOR DAYS.
THOR HAD LONG SINCE GROWN IMPATIENT.



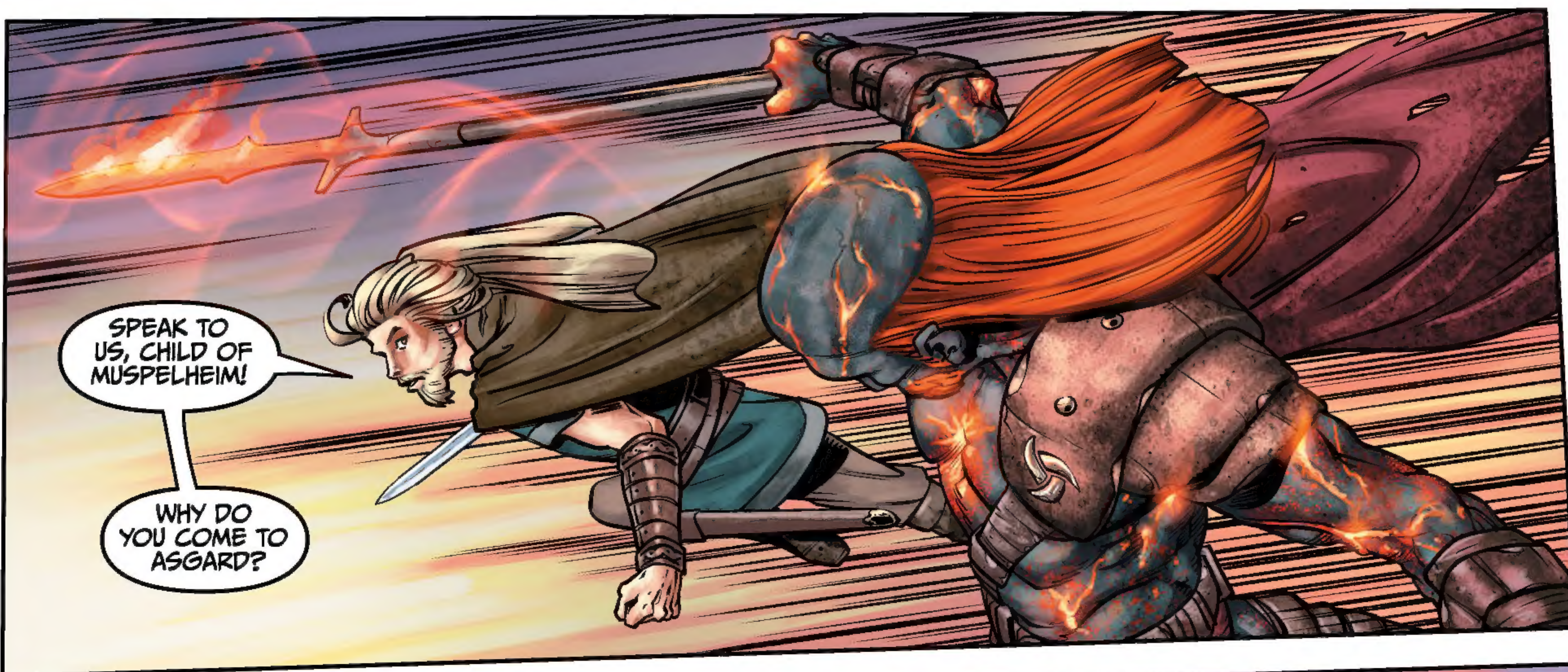
"THE MUSPEL WAS A THING OF VOLCANIC FURY, ITS EYES OBSIDIAN AND ITS SINEWS IRON."

HEIMDALL!



"BUT ONLY BALDR, SON OF HAVI, LOOKED UPON THE MUSPEL WITH WONDER INSTEAD OF LOATHING."

HE MOVES LIKE FLAME ACROSS A BARLEY FIELD.



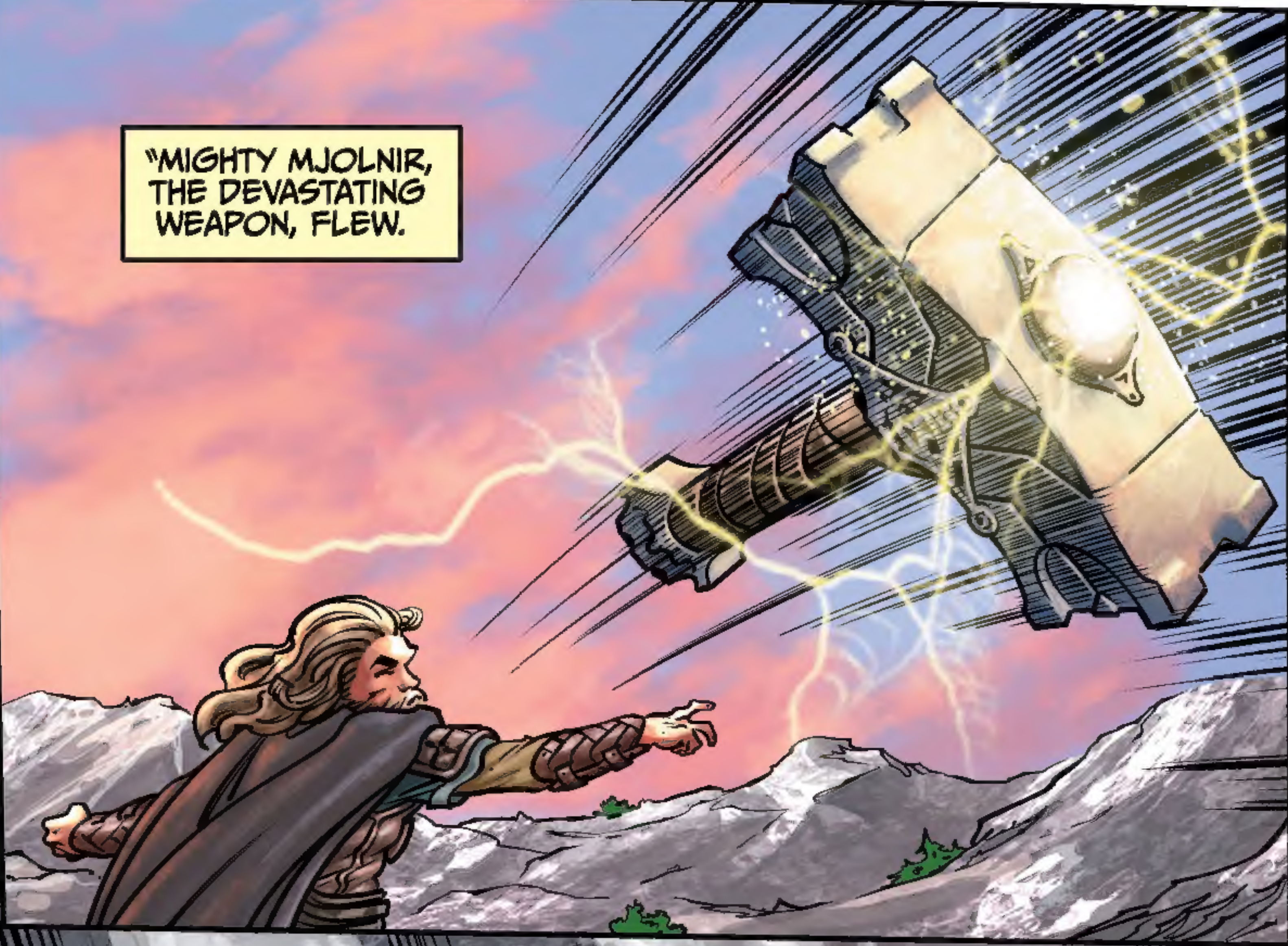
SPEAK TO US, CHILD OF MUSPELHEIM!

WHY DO YOU COME TO ASGARD?



WHY DO YOU THINK, BOY? TO KILL!

RETURN TO YOUR WET NURSE, YOUNG BALDR. THOR WILL END THIS HUNT!



"MIGHTY MJOLNIR,
THE DEVASTATING
WEAPON, FLEW."



"THE HAMMER
STRUCK."



THOR,
YOU FOOL!
WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE?
BALDR IS
LOST!



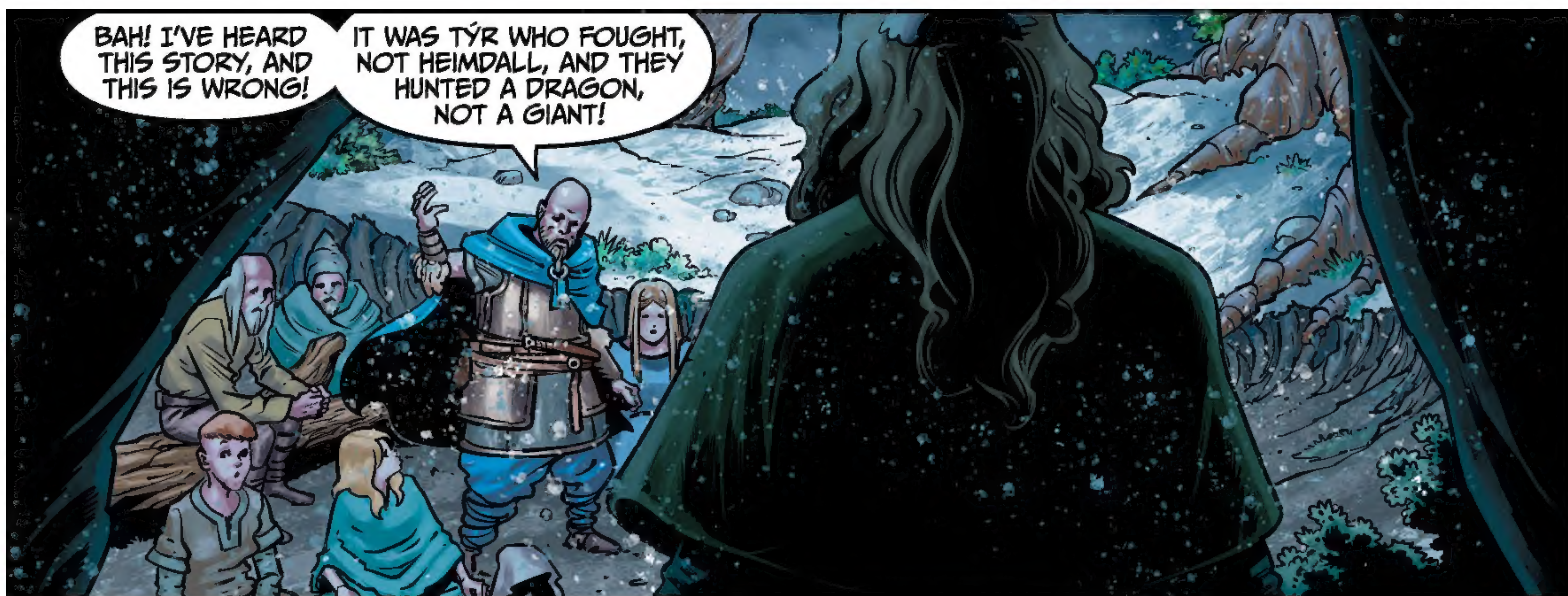
HAHAHA
HAHA
HAHA

"THOR
LAUGHED."



FOR THOR
KNEW THAT BEAUTIFUL
BALDR, GOD OF LIGHT,
COULD NOT BE
KILLED.

NOT BY
ANY WEAPON
HE KNEW.



BAH! I'VE HEARD
THIS STORY, AND
THIS IS WRONG!

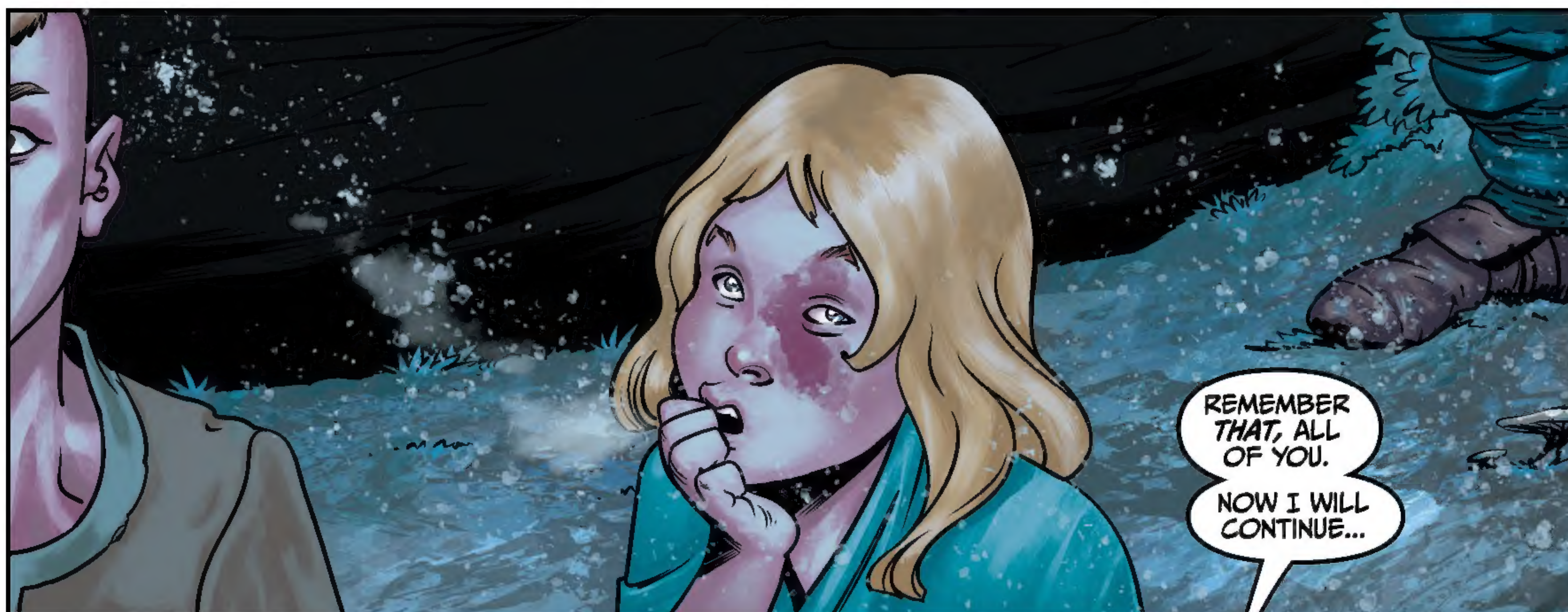
IT WAS TÝR WHO FOUGHT,
NOT HEIMDALL, AND THEY
HUNTED A DRAGON,
NOT A GIANT!



I'VE BEEN
TELLING STORIES
A LONG TIME.

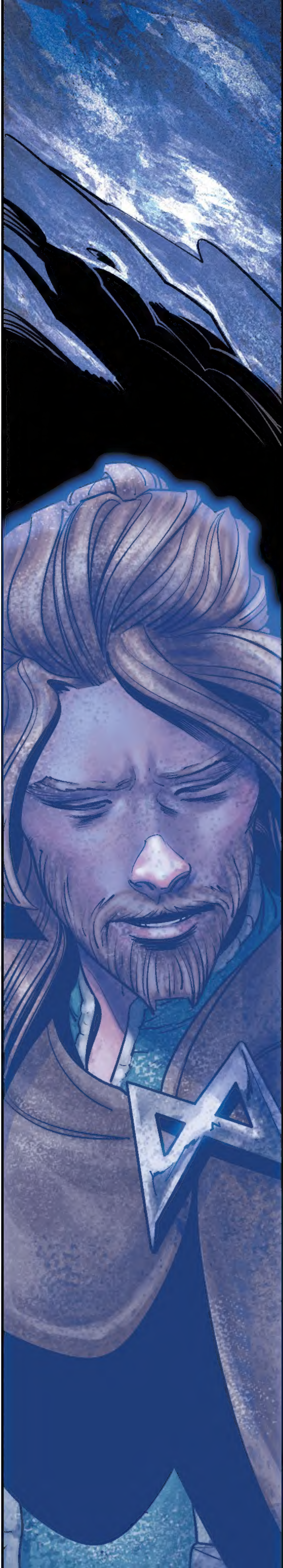
THERE IS
NO WRONG,
THERE IS NO
RIGHT.

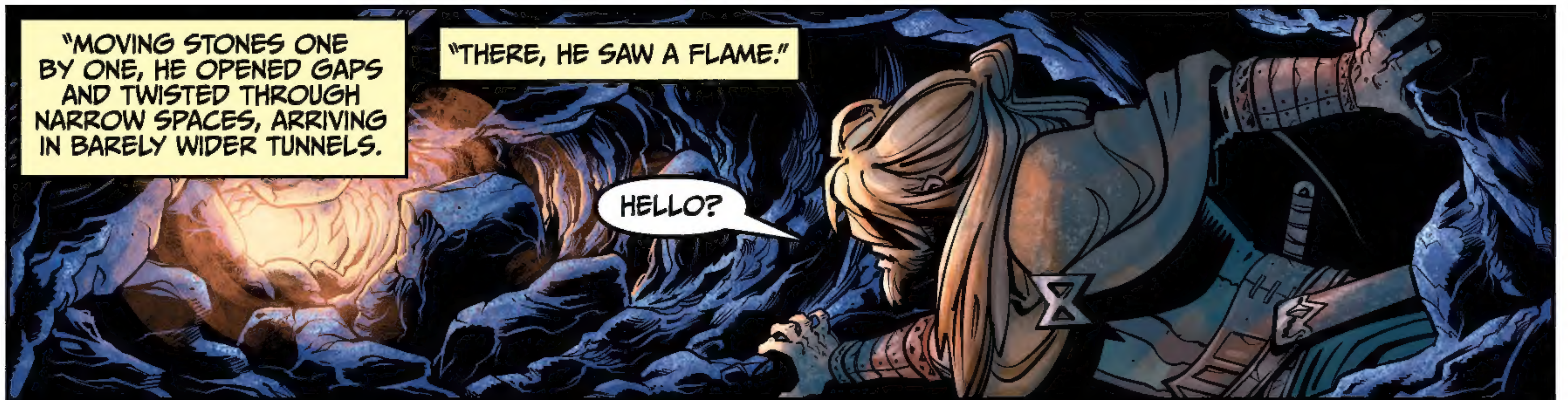
THERE ARE
ONLY STORIES,
CHANGING FORM
SWIFT AS
WATER.



REMEMBER
THAT, ALL
OF YOU.

NOW I WILL
CONTINUE...





"MOVING STONES ONE BY ONE, HE OPENED GAPS AND TWISTED THROUGH NARROW SPACES, ARRIVING IN BARELY WIDER TUNNELS."

"THERE, HE SAW A FLAME."

HELLO?



RAISE NO WEAPONS AND DO NO HARM.

GLADLY, ELDER DWARF.

WHO ARE YOU?



ONE WHO WAS ONCE CHAINED, WHO BROUGHT A THING OF FIRE TO ASGARD.

I WAS PRISONER OF THE MUSPELS, SLAVE IN THEIR MOLTEN LANDS; HERE I ESCAPED AND HERE MY ABDUCTOR FOLLOWED.

THEN I MUST BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS, FOR YOU HAVE SUFFERED MUCH--



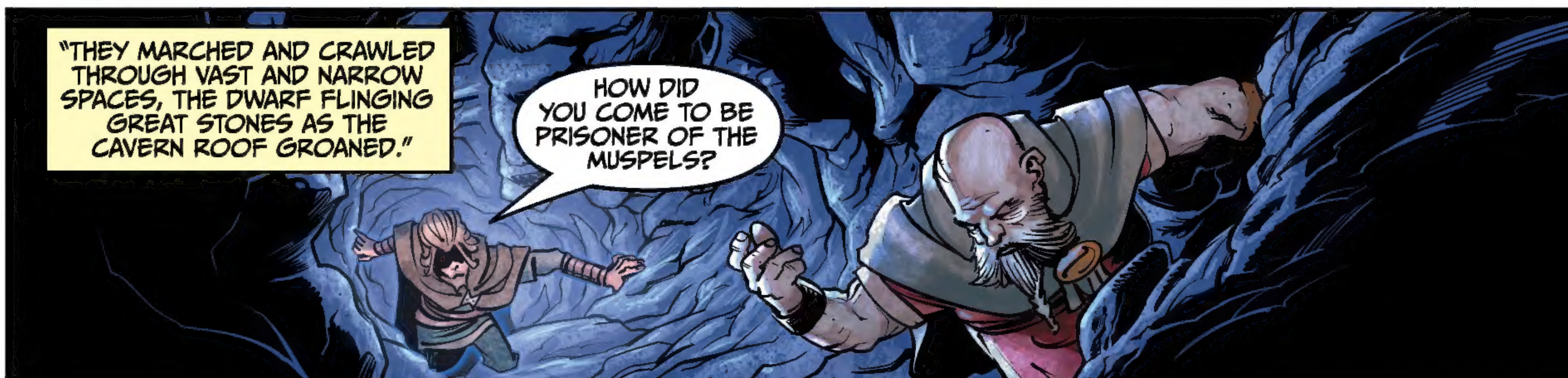
--AND NOW YOU ARE TRAPPED, THANKS TO THE CLUMSINESS OF OUR HUNT.

I PROMISE YOU HOSPITALITY, GOLD, JEWELS WHEN WE REACH THE SURFACE--

=PFFT!:=

DWARVES ARE DIGGERS BY NATURE, UNLIKE GANGLY AESIR.

FREEDOM IS NOT FAR, AND NEEDS NO PAYMENT.



"THEY MARCHED AND CRAWLED THROUGH VAST AND NARROW SPACES, THE DWARF FLINGING GREAT STONES AS THE CAVERN ROOF GROANED."

HOW DID YOU COME TO BE PRISONER OF THE MUSPELS?



YOU'VE BEEN
TO SVARTALFHEIM,
I HOPE?
SEEN
THE WORKS OF
DWARVENKIND?

ONCE, LONG
AGO--MY FATHER AND
MY UNCLE LOKI BROUGHT
ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG,
BUT I FEAR THE VISIT
WAS BRIEF.

PITY, FOR
SVARTALFHEIM
PUTS THE OTHER
EIGHT REALMS
TO SHAME.



GRASS GREEN
AS EMERALD ABOVE,
AND BELOW? PALACES
SO VAST THEY MAKE
JÖTNAR SEEM SMALL
AS DWARVES.

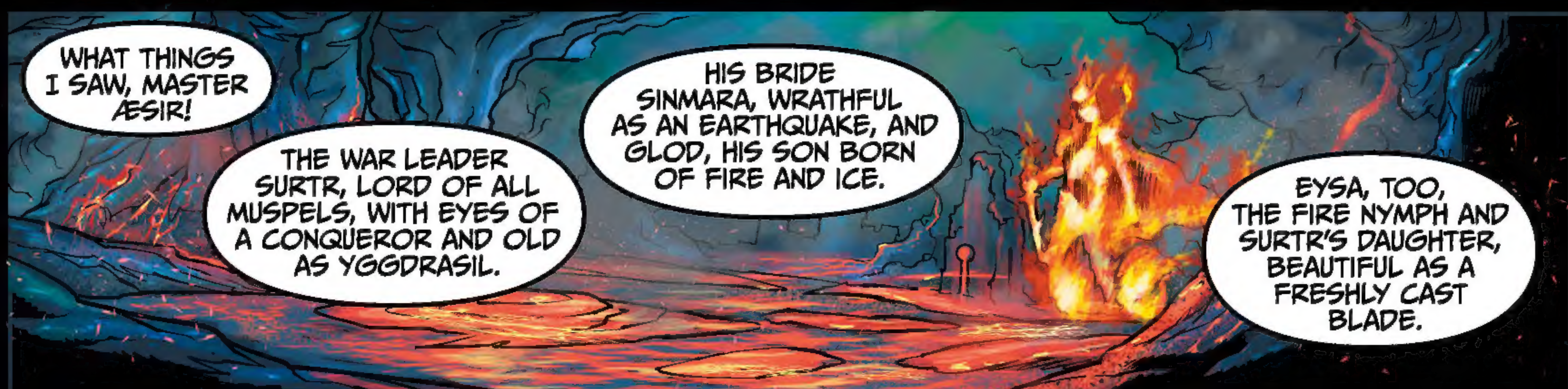
NO
WONDER
INDEED THE
MUSPELS
CRAVE IT.



THEY MASS
AT THE GATES
FROM MUSPELHEIM
TO SVARTALFHEIM,
AND OLD FOOL
THAT I WAS--

--WELL, I FELL
INTO THEIR HANDS,
TRAPPED LIKE
A RABBIT.

FOR MONTHS
I TOILED UNDER THE
GIANT YOU HUNTED,
REFORGING HIS WEAPONS
AS THEY MELTED IN
DEATHLY HEAT.



WHAT THINGS
I SAW, MASTER
ÆSIR!

THE WAR LEADER
SURTR, LORD OF ALL
MUSPELS, WITH EYES OF
A CONQUEROR AND OLD
AS YGGDRASIL.

HIS BRIDE
SINMARA, WRATHFUL
AS AN EARTHQUAKE, AND
GLOD, HIS SON BORN
OF FIRE AND ICE.

EYSA, TOO,
THE FIRE NYMPH AND
SURTR'S DAUGHTER,
BEAUTIFUL AS A
FRESHLY CAST
BLADE.



I FEAR THE
MUSPELS WILL BRING
WAR TO SVARTALFHEIM--
AND WHO COULD STAND
AGAINST SURTR AND
HIS LOT?

YET IN TIME
I WILL RETURN,
FOR MY KINFOLK
AWAIT.



IF EVERY DWARF
SPOKE WITH SUCH
POETRY, ALL THE AESIR
WOULD BE STRUCK
MUTE WITH SHAME.

I SEE THE
SCARS ON YOUR
ARMS AND HEAR
SMOKE IN YOUR
LUNGS--ARE YOU
WELL ENOUGH TO
RETURN HOME?



TOO OLD
FOR WAR, BUT
NOT TOO OLD
TO DRAG THIS
CREAKING BODY
FORWARD.



YOU ARE KIND,
MASTER AESIR, BUT
YOUNG AND TOO
COMFORTABLE IN
YOUR ASGARDIAN
HOME--

--TO UNDERSTAND
THAT PAIN IS THE
MARROW IN THE
BONES OF LIFE.

THE GREATEST
TRIALS COME WITH AGE,
THOUGH I CANNOT BLAME
YOU FOR ENJOYING
EXISTENCE AWHILE.

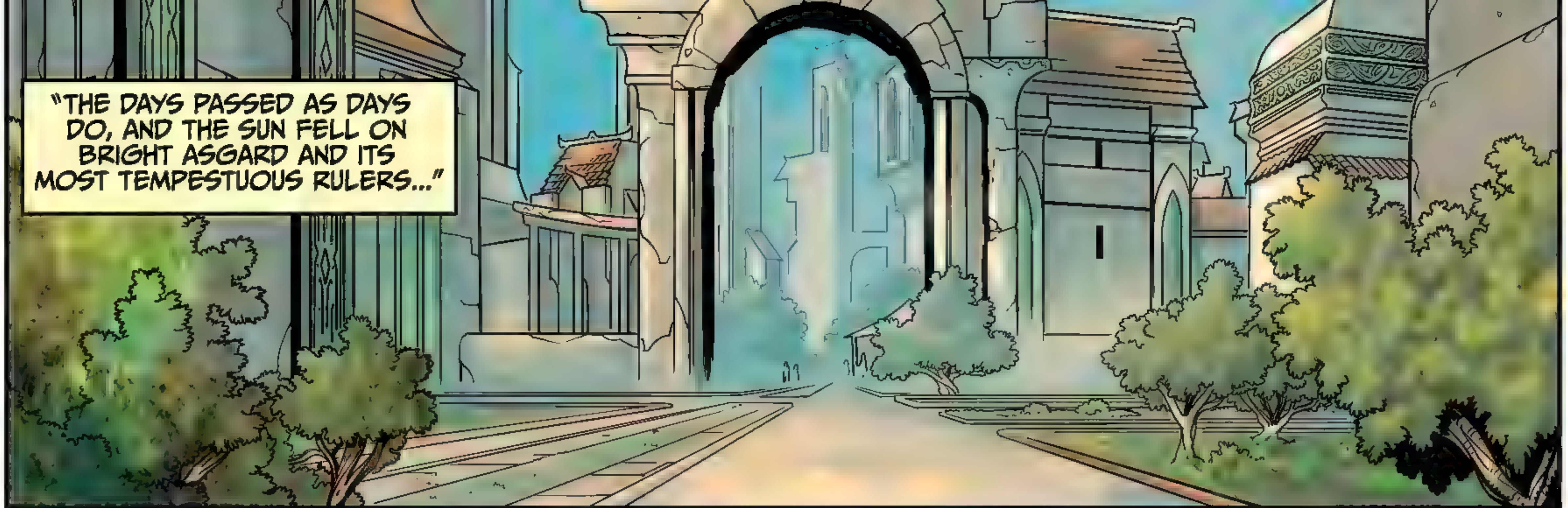


AND NOW WE
PART, FOR THE
SURFACE OF ASGARD
IS HITHER AND MY
DESTINATION LIES
ELSEWHERE.

IT HAS BEEN
AN HONOR, ELDER
DWARF.

SHOULD YOU FIND
YOURSELF IN ASGARD
AGAIN, CALL ON ME AT
GLEAMING BREIDABLIK--
I WOULD BE PROUD TO
SHARE MY HOME.





"THE DAYS PASSED AS DAYS DO, AND THE SUN FELL ON BRIGHT ASGARD AND ITS MOST TEMPESTUOUS RULERS..."



HE IS MY SON, TYR!

THOR MAY BE FOOLISH BUT HE IS RIGHT--YOUR SON IS WELL.

ONE HUNDRED STRONG MEN MARCH TO DIG HIM OUT, AND HE WILL BE FOUND WITHOUT EVEN A SCAR.



WILL HE? THESE PEOPLE SAY ASGARD IS AT PEACE. THAT WE ARE IN A GOLDEN AGE.

BUT THERE IS WORD OF TUMULT IN JOTUNHEIM.

LOKI, THE TRAITOROUS WORM, ROAMS FREE WHILE OTHERS JEST ABOUT HIS ANTICS.

AND NOW A MUSPEL IN OUR LANDS!



YET YOUR SON IS WISE?

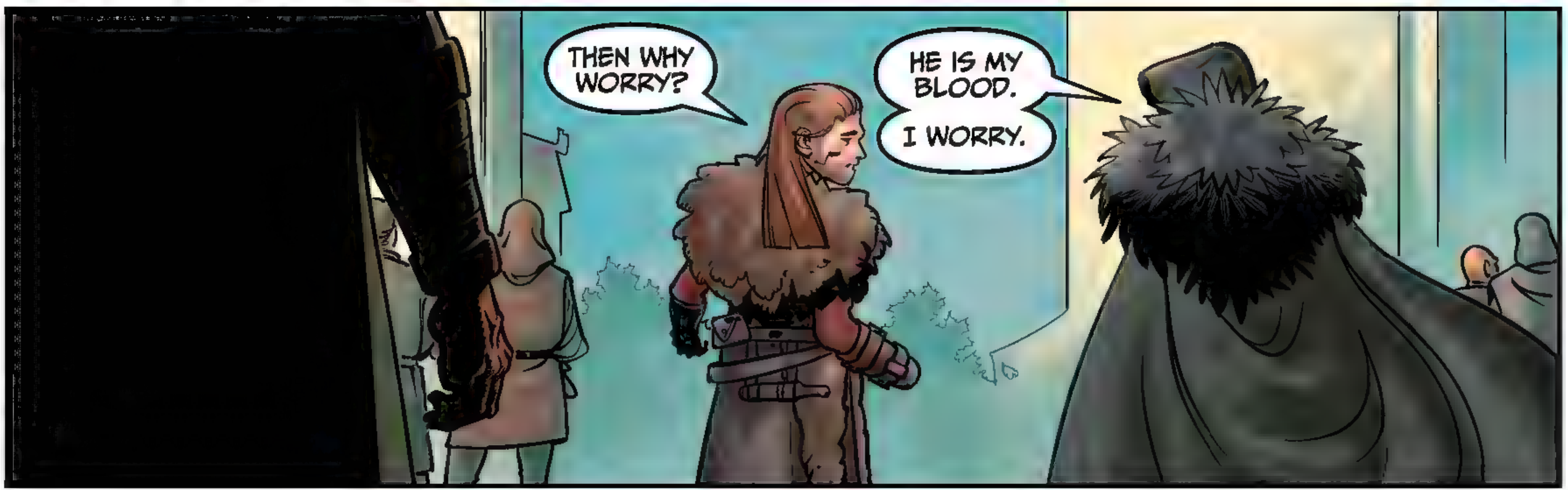
AYE.

AND STRONG?

A MAGNIFICENT WARRIOR.

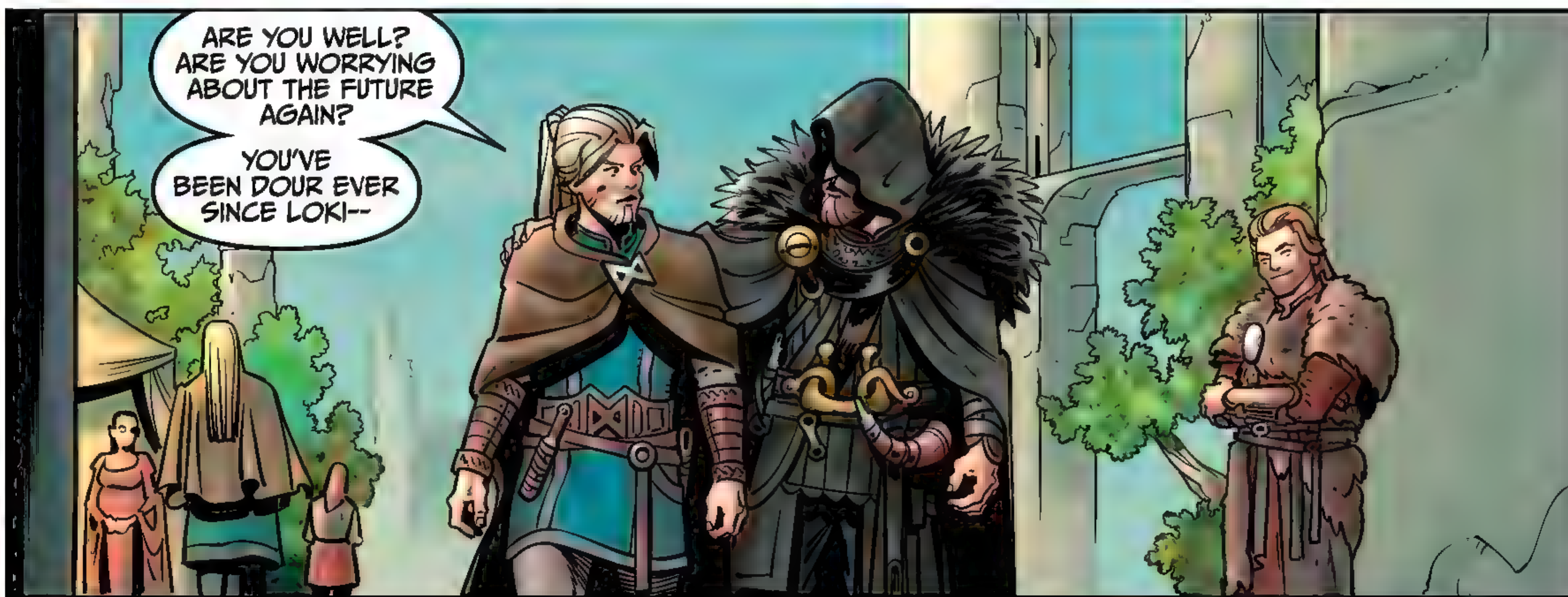
AND BELOVED?

MORE THAN ANY OTHER ÆSIR.



THEN WHY WORRY?

HE IS MY BLOOD. I WORRY.



"SO THEY CELEBRATED WITH MEAT AND MEAD AND STORIES.

"AND IF THE FEAST SEEMED FAMILIAR, AND THOSE STORIES HAD BEEN HEARD BEFORE, WHAT OF IT? NOT ALL JOY REQUIRES NOVELTY.

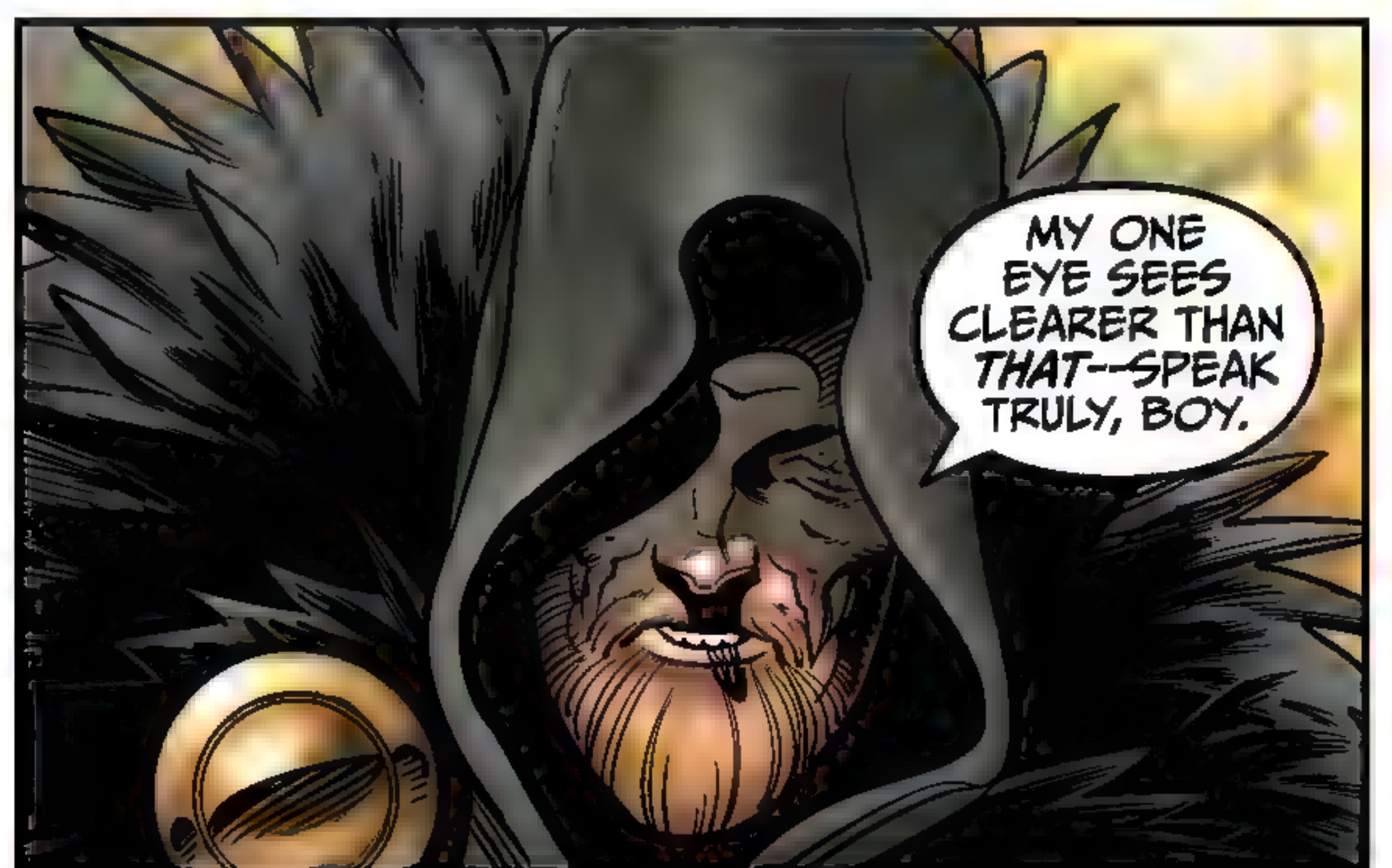
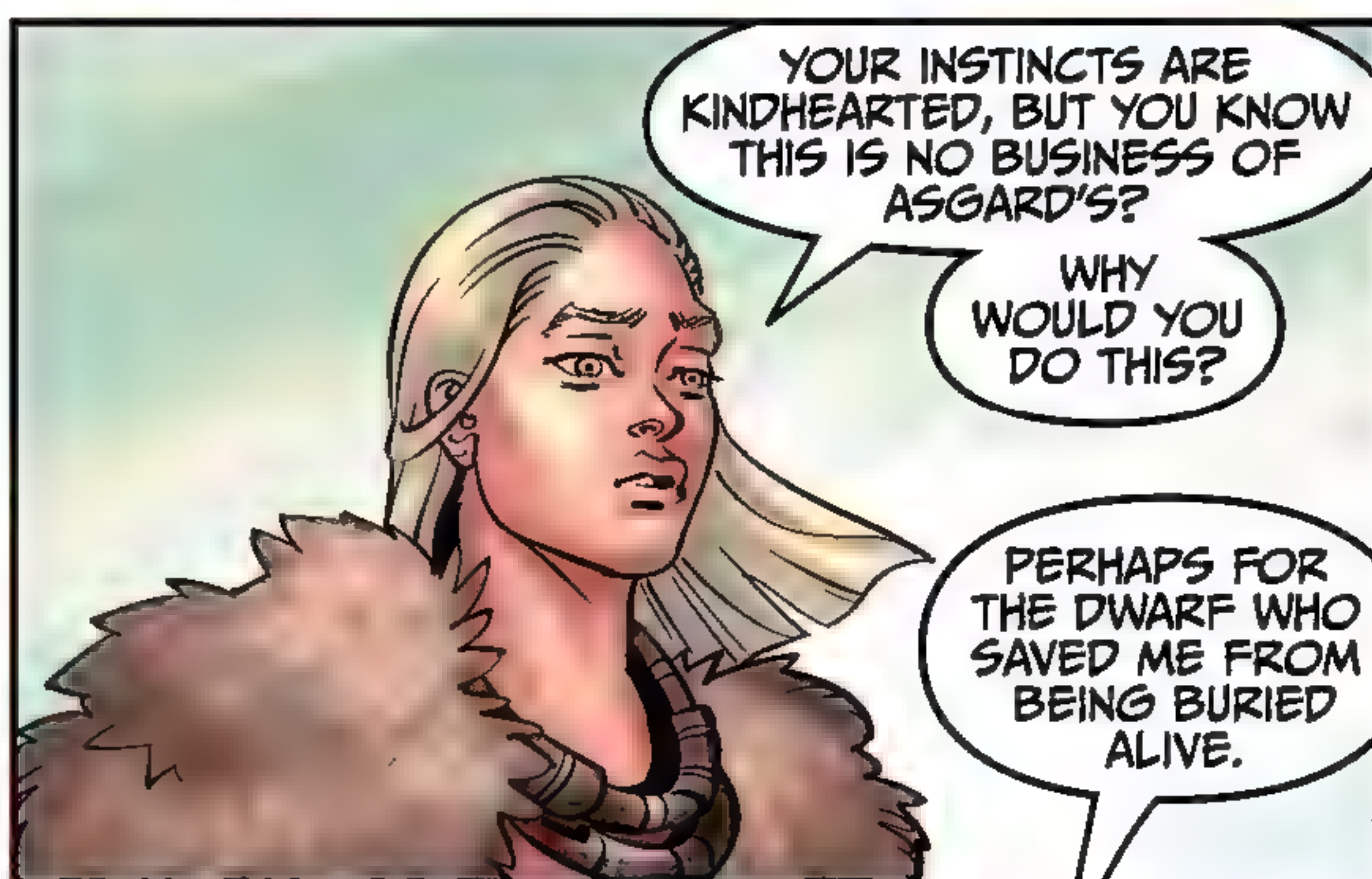
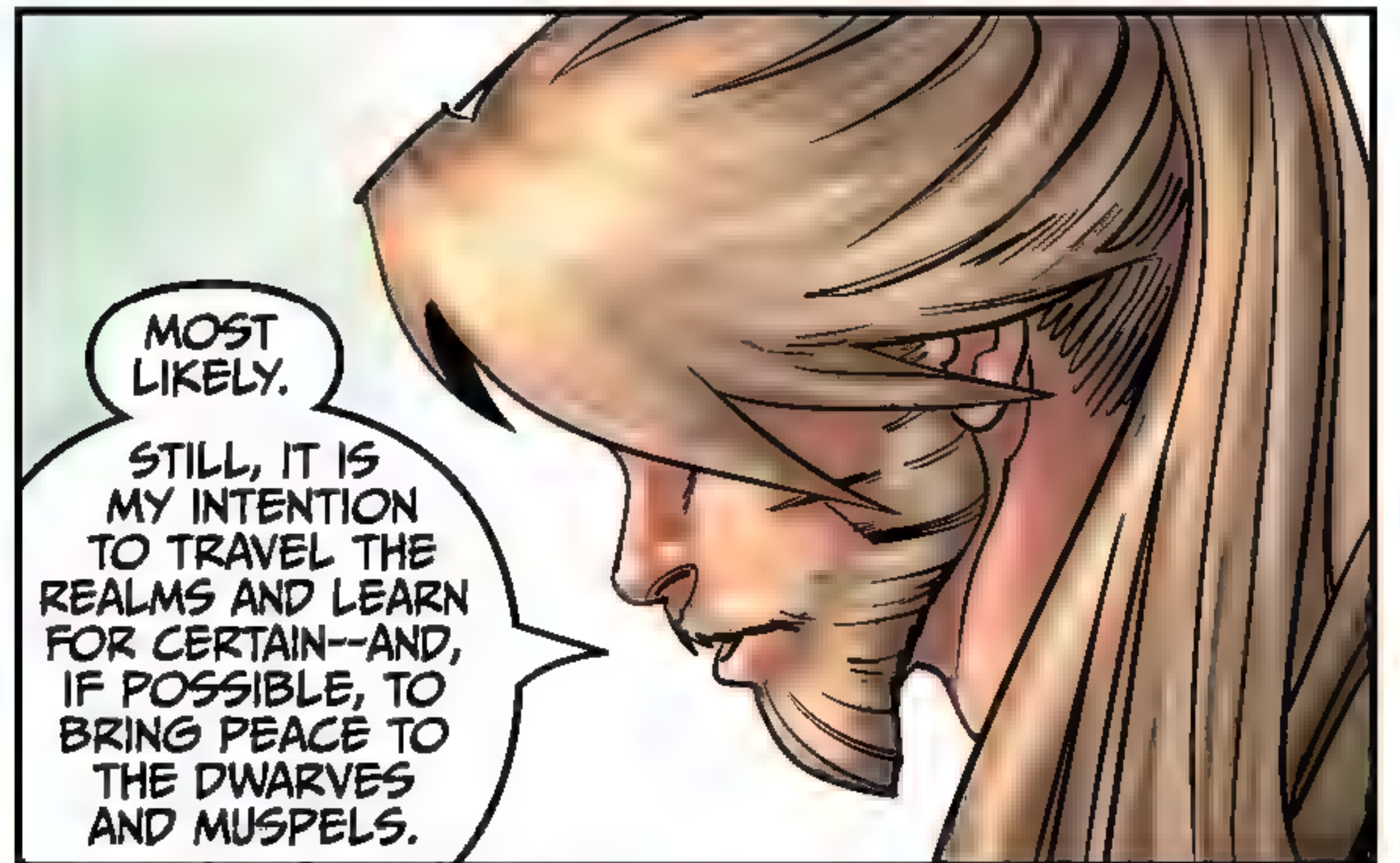
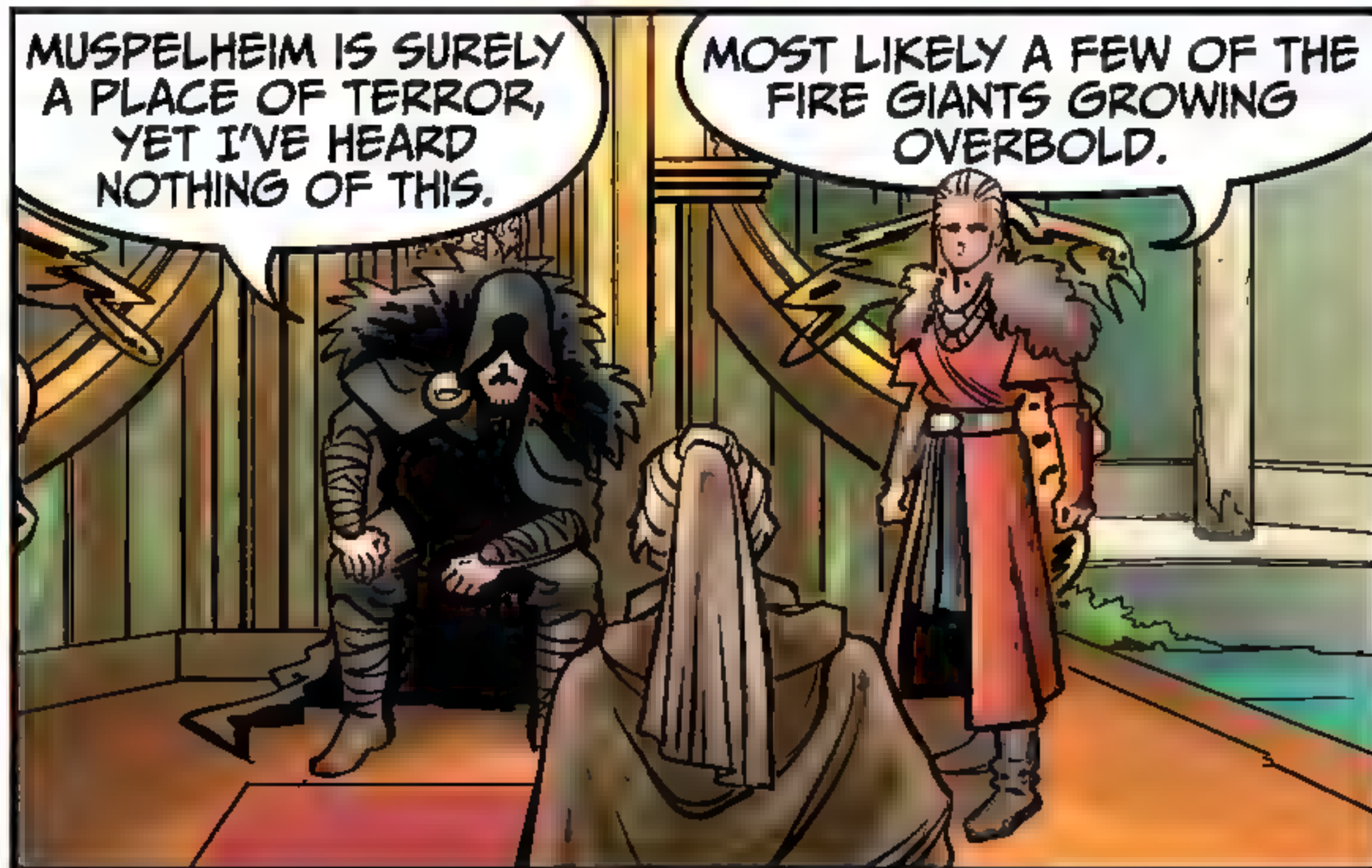
"BALDR LOOKED TO HIS FATHER AND STEPMOTHER, AND CONSIDERED THE MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE THAT HAD BECOME ONE OF MUTUAL RESPECT--IF NOT LOVE.

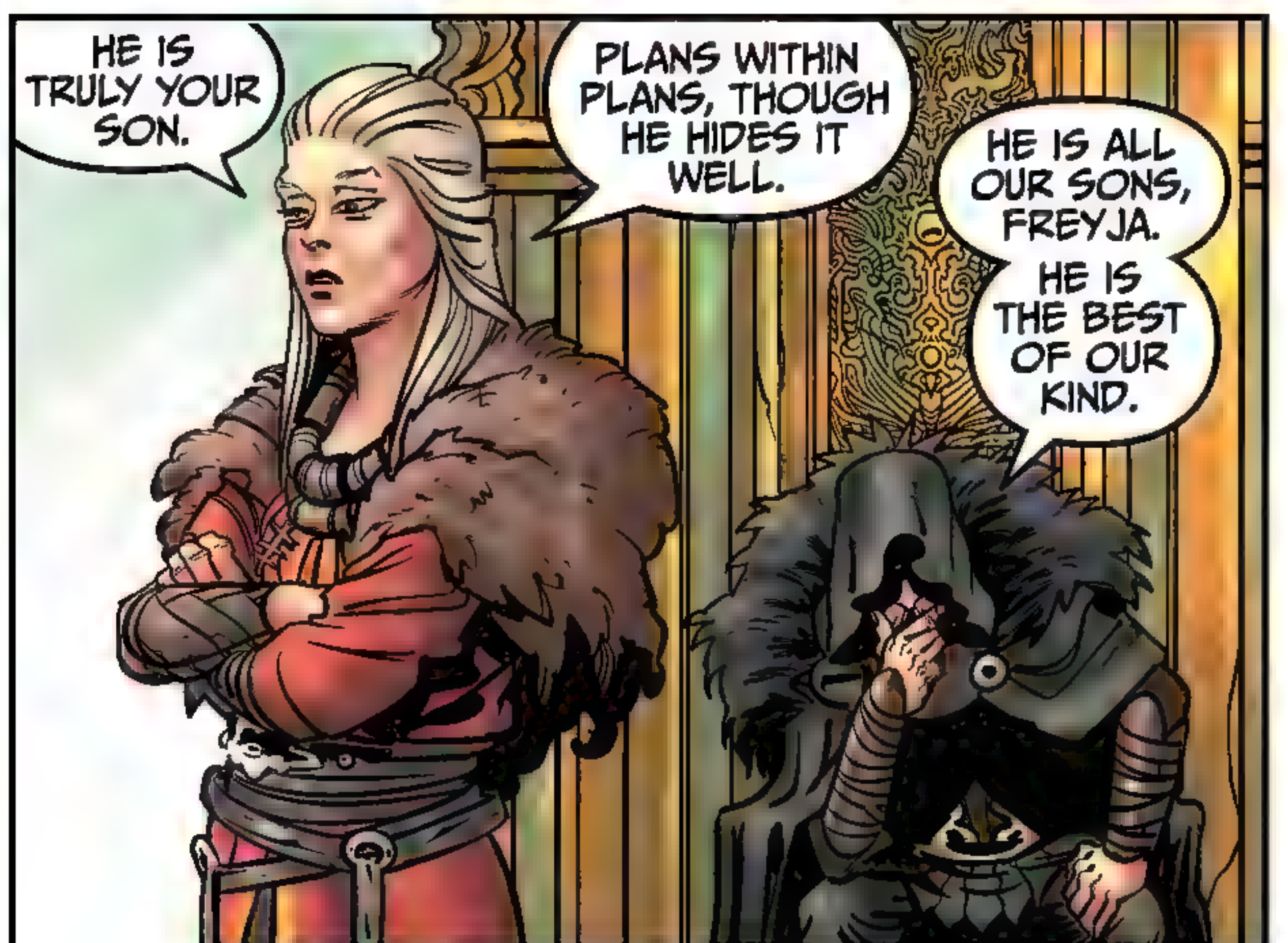
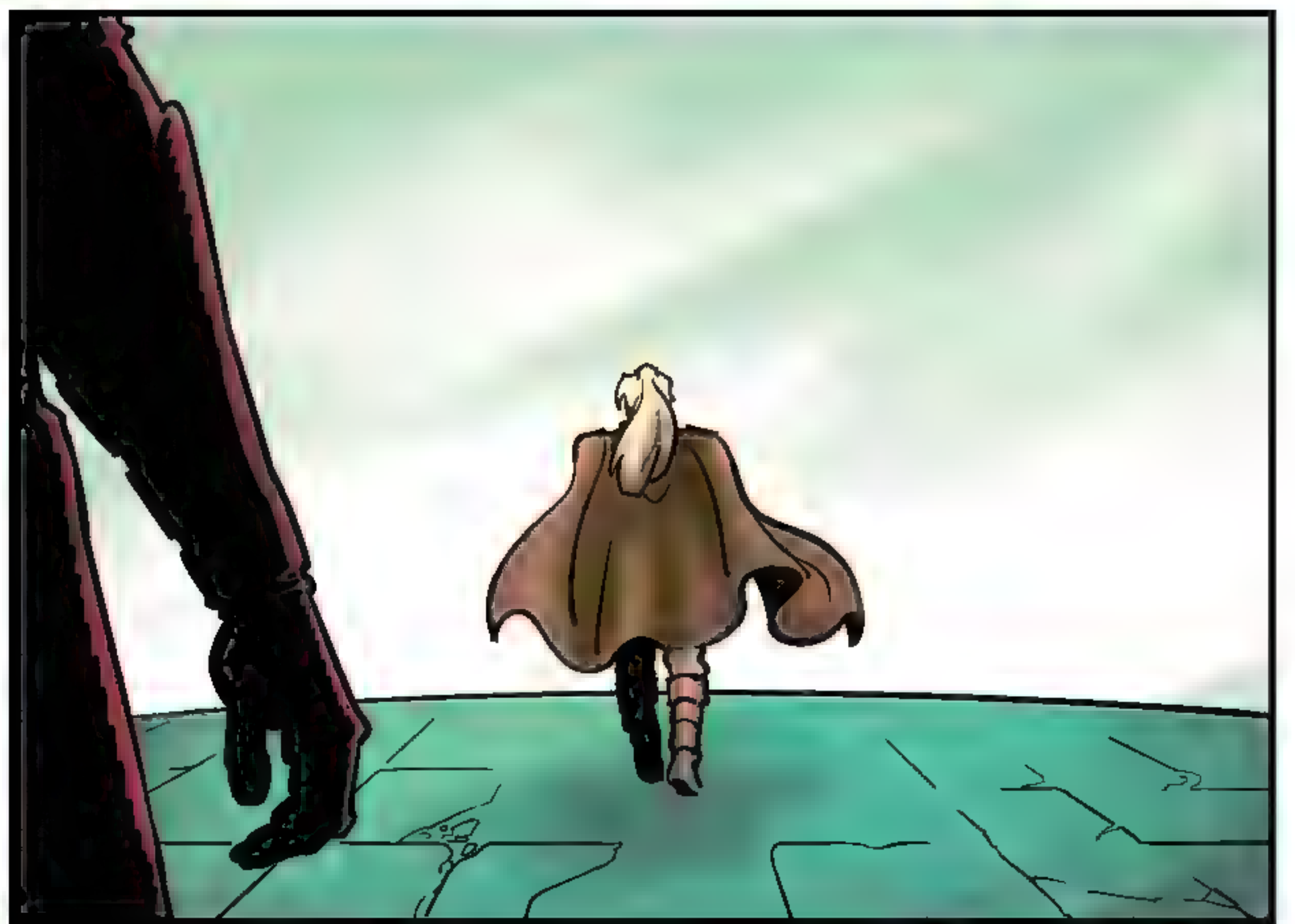
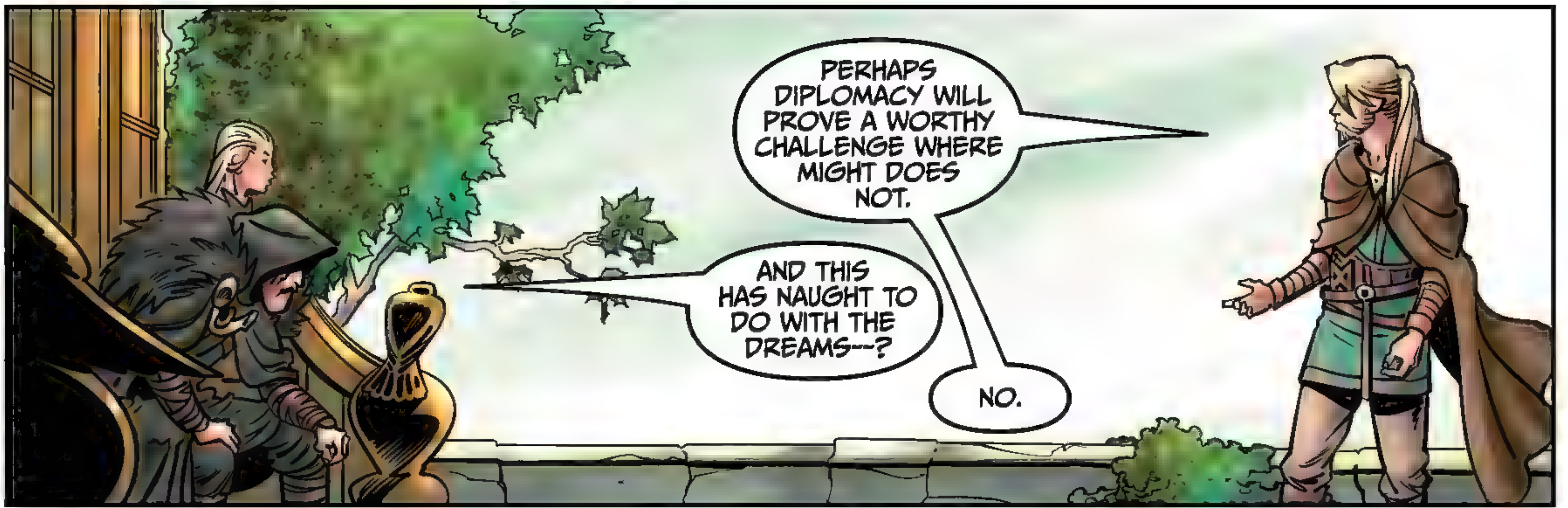
"HIS EYE STRAYED TO WOMEN YOUNGER THAN FREYJA, TOO (AND A FEW MEN BESIDES).

"AS THE EVENING WORE ON, HE NOTED THE WOUNDS OF THE ÆSIR WARRIORS: HIS FATHER'S MISSING EYE. TYR'S LOST HAND.

"HOME IN BREIÐABLIK, THE ABODE HE MADE WHERE NOTHING BANEFUL MAY BE FOUND, BALDR PONDERED ALL HE HAD SEEN.

"HE SLEPT LITTLE, THOUGH THAT WAS NOT RARE FOR BALDR...





"AND BALDR SET FORTH IN HRINGHORN, HIS SHIP THAT COULD HOLD A HUNDRED WARRIORS YET SAIL THE SHALLOWEST BROOK.

"LIKE ALL THINGS CRAFTED BY BALDR, IT WAS A THING OF BEAUTY.

"BUT BALDR DID NOT SAIL HRINGHORN TO SVARTALFHEIM OR MUSPELHEIM.

"THERE ARE STRANGE LANDS AT THE EDGE OF JÖTUNHEIM, THE FROST GIANT REALM, WHERE THE OCEAN BECOMES SLUSH.

"THE LINES BETWEEN SOLID AND LIQUID--AND THE LINES BETWEEN SPACE AND TIME--BLUR.

"IN THESE STRANGE LANDS ARE STRANGER RITUALS THAT CALL ON OLD AND FORGOTTEN ARTS.

"WHERE BALDR LEARNED THEM I DO NOT KNOW, BUT HE PRACTICED THEM WITH CARE AND SKILL.

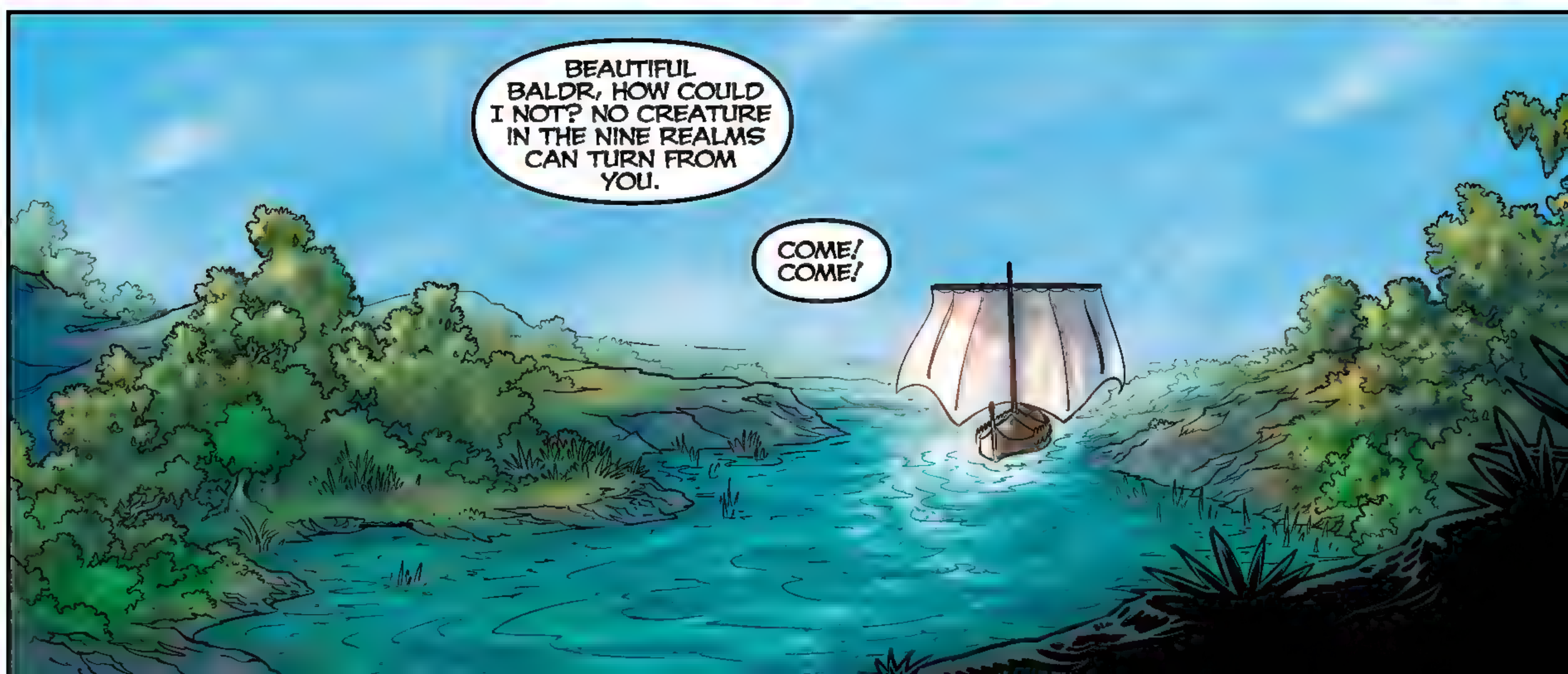
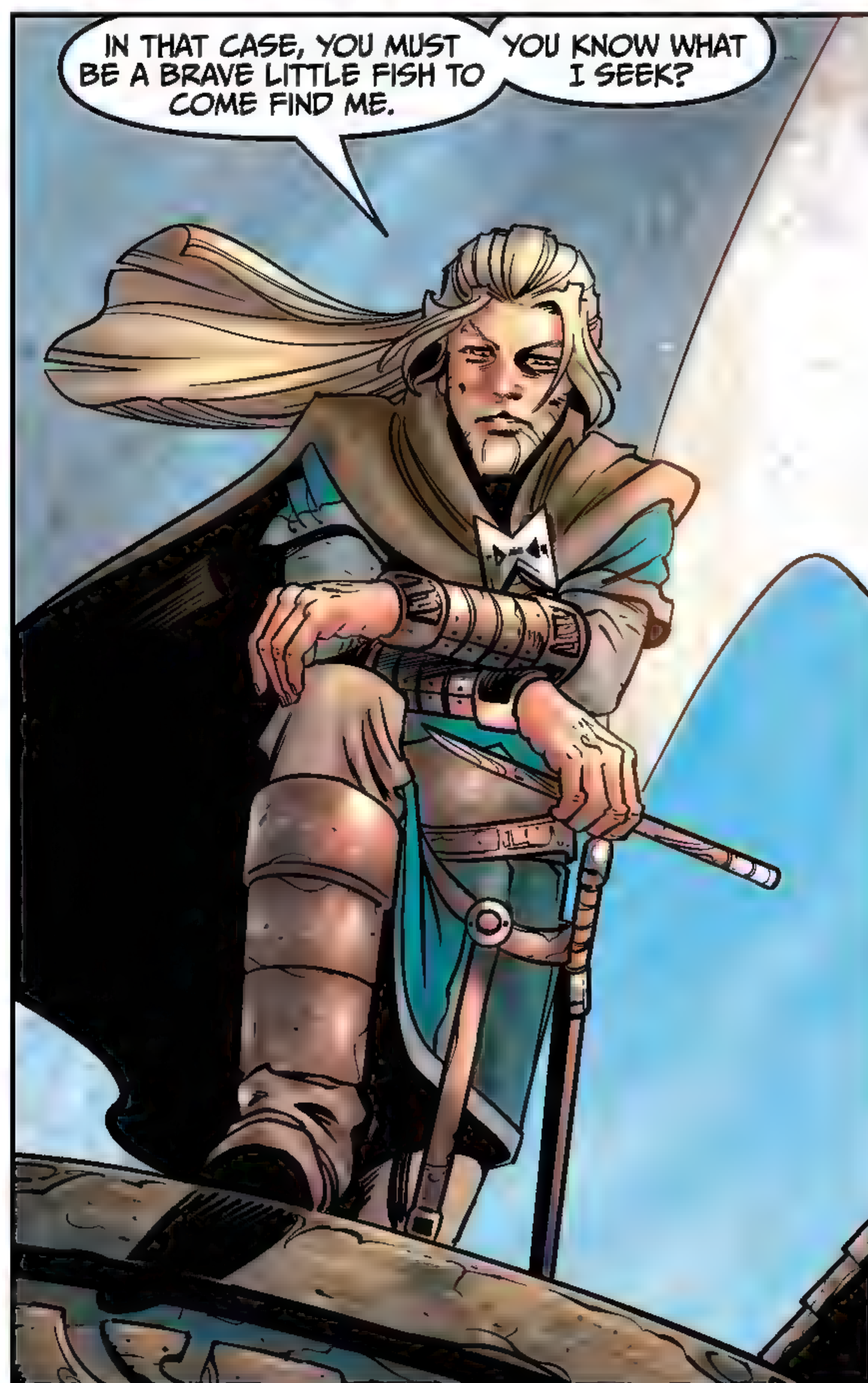


"HE FOUND THE ANSWERS HE SOUGHT AND SAILED ON.



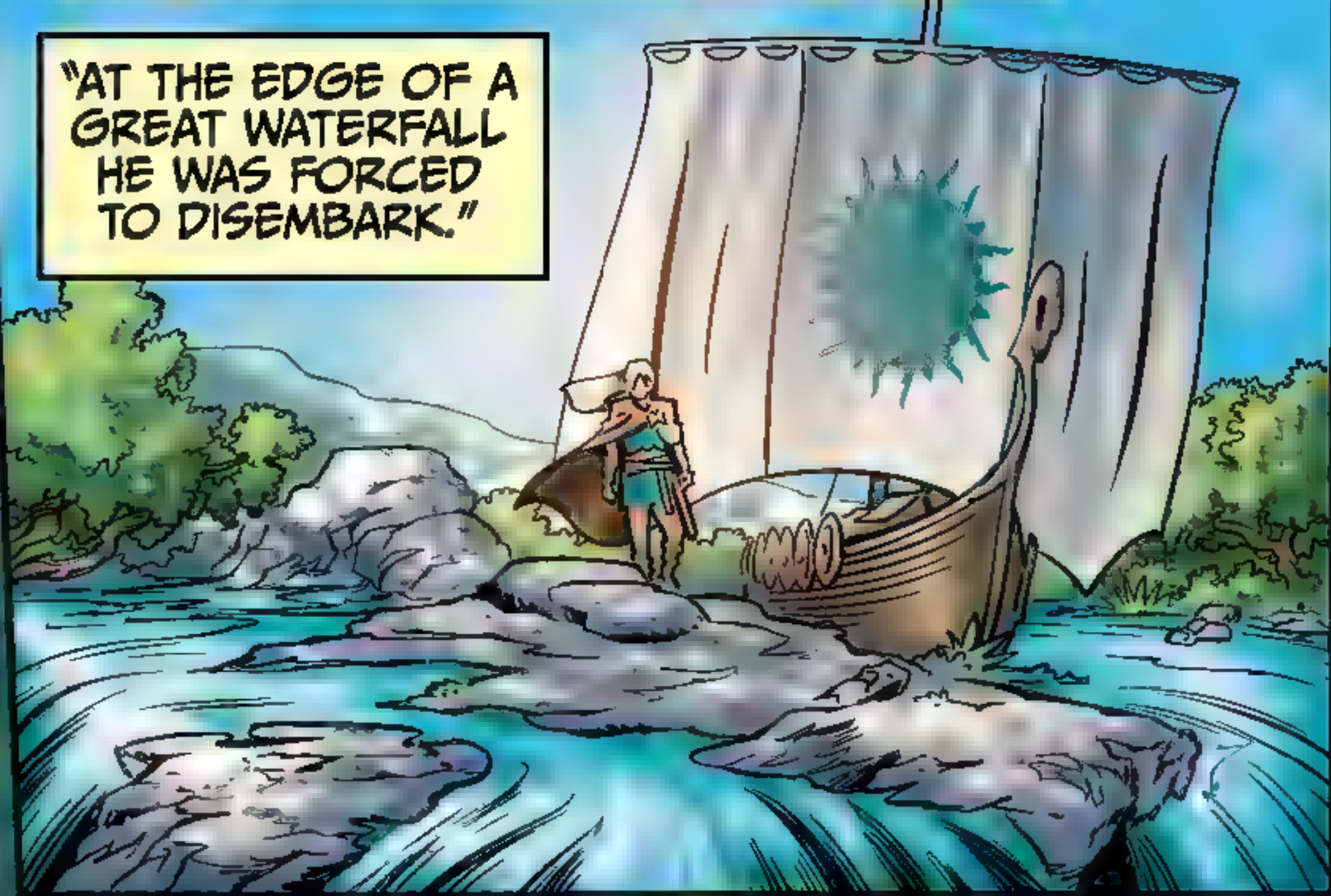
"HRINGHORN! LEFT THE
GELID OCEAN AND SAILED
INTO THE MARSHES.

"THERE, BALDR PRODUCED
A FLUTE AND PLAYED FOR
THREE DAYS, UNTIL THE
CURRENT ITSELF STOPPED
TO LISTEN. AND AT LAST..."



"BALDR FOLLOWED THE FISH THROUGH A LABYRINTH OF ISLETS AND RUNNELS. THE CURRENT SEEMED TO TWIST IMPOSSIBLY."

"AT THE EDGE OF A GREAT WATERFALL HE WAS FORCED TO DISEMBARK."



THE LAKE!
THE LAKE!

LOOK INTO ITS
DARK WATERS,
AND YOU WILL SEE
YOUR DESTINY!

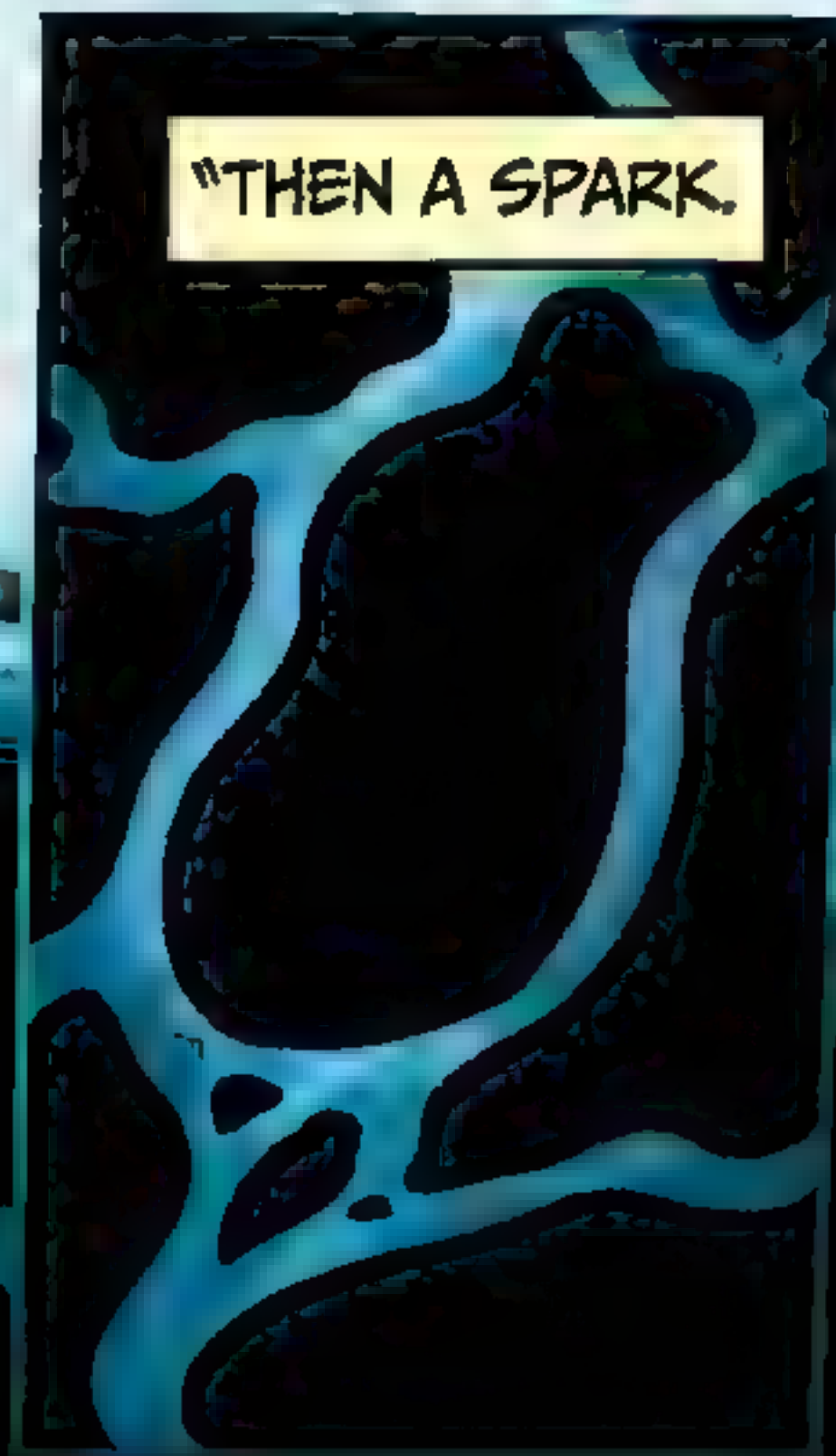


"THE LAKE LOOKED DARK
AND UNWELCOMING, BUT HE
DID AS THE FISH BADE."



"FIRST HE SAW ONLY THE
BLACK, WITH NOT EVEN
STARS REFLECTED."

"THEN A SPARK."



"THEN
SOMETHING
MORE."



"'EYSA, DAUGHTER OF SURTR,'
THE FISH CRIED.

"THE VISION IN THE WATER
WAS UNLIKE ANY AESIR WOMAN
BALDR HAD KNOWN.

"SHE MOVED MORE
GRACEFULLY THAN
THE MUSPEL HE'D
FOUGHT, DANCING AND
EVER CHANGING AS A
PYRE. SHE SMELLED
NOT OF SULFUR OR
ASH, BUT CUMIN AND
MUSTARD SEEDS.

"HE SAW HER
COMPETING AGAINST
HER FELLOWS
ON THE FIELDS OF
MUSPELHEIM, WIELDING
HER GLAIVE WITH
DEADLY ELEGANCE.

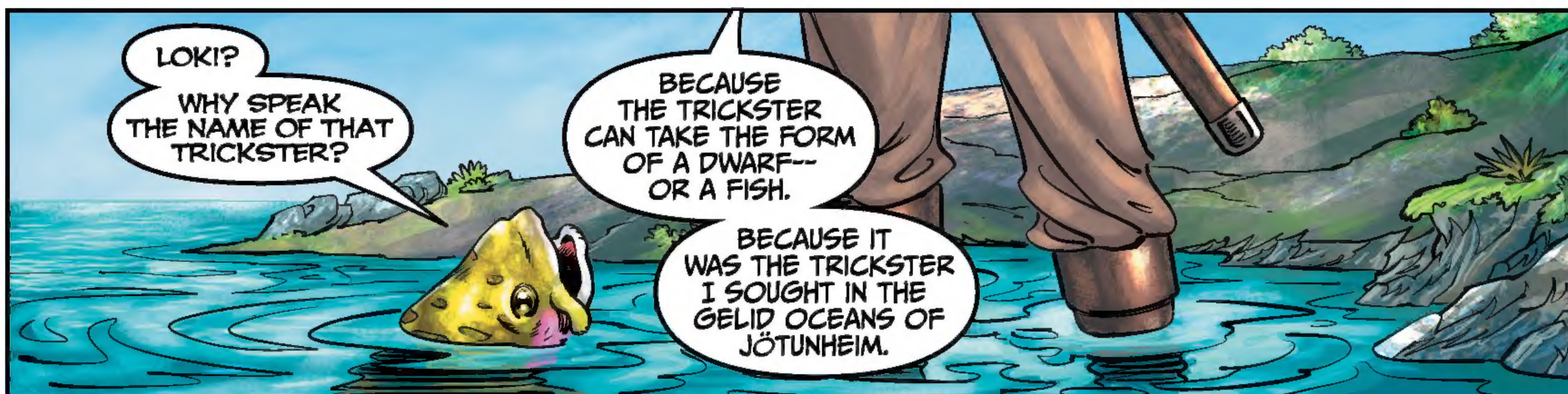
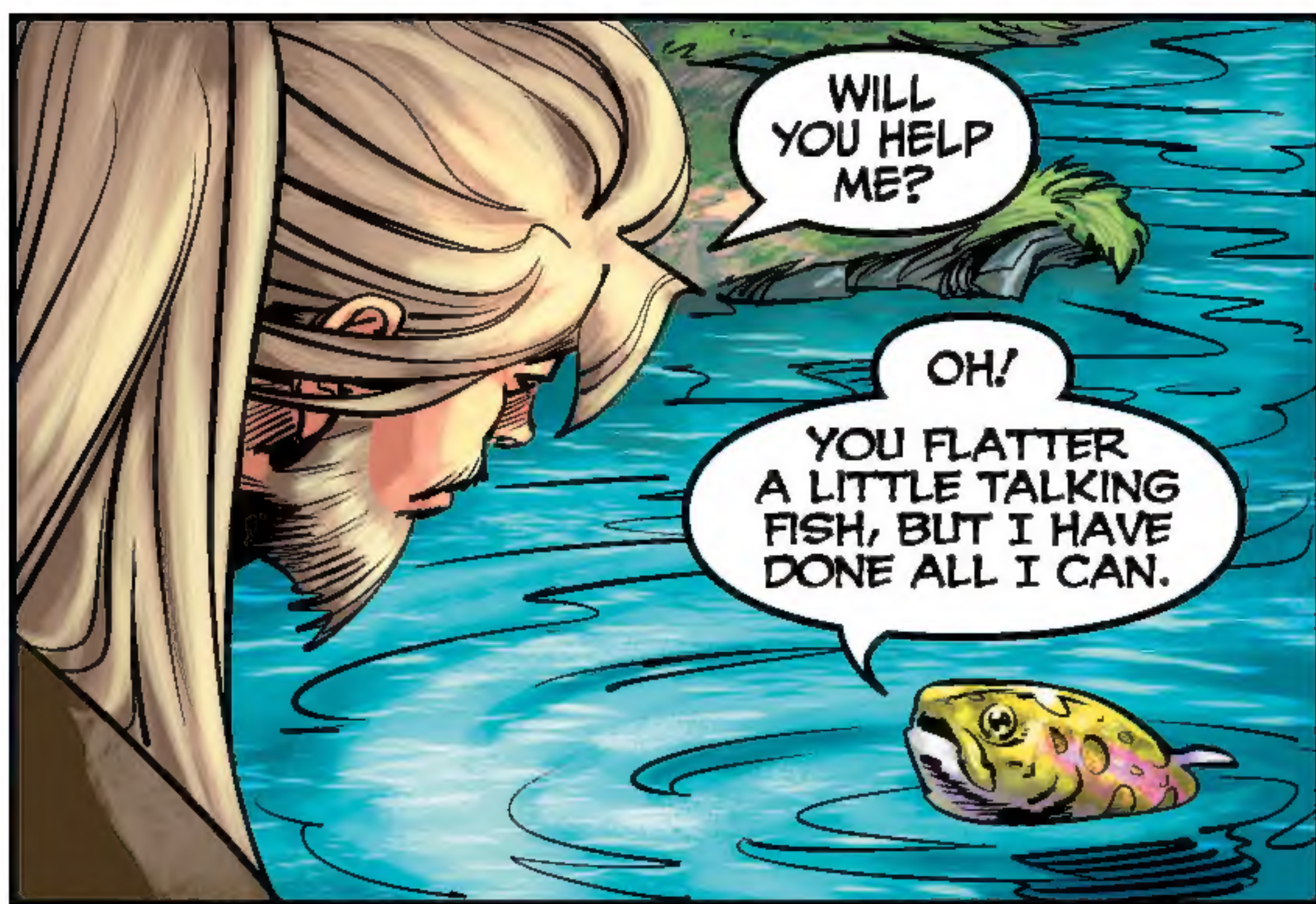
"WHERE THE OTHER
MUSPELS SEEMED
DOUR, SHE SEEMED
JOYOUS. HER EYES
SHONE WITH THE
KEENNESS OF A STAR.

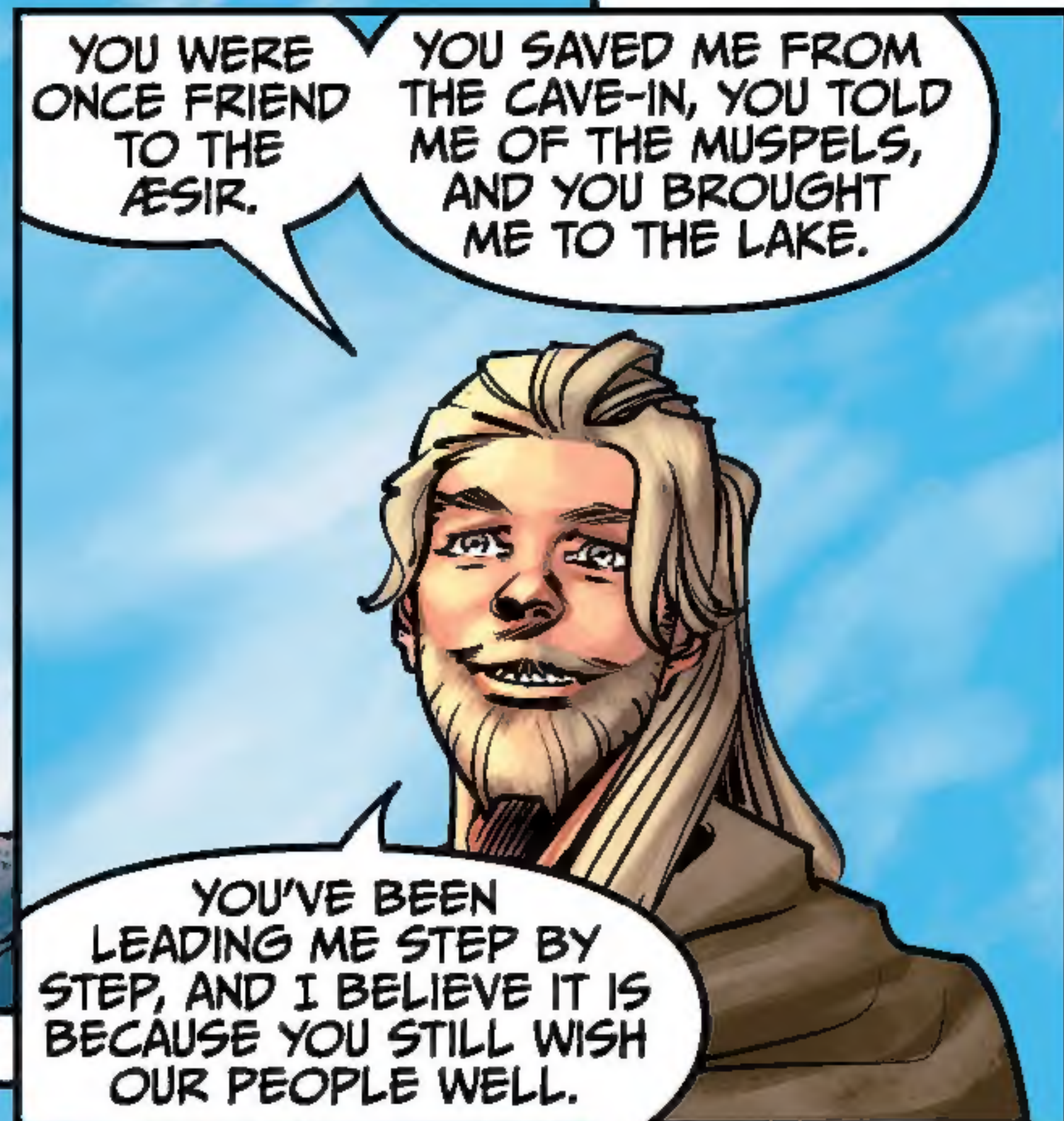
"BALDR DID NOT
BREATHE FOR FEAR OF
ENDING THE DREAM.

"'EYSA, DAUGHTER OF SURTR,'
THE FISH SAID. 'WIN HER HEART
AND YOU WILL WIN THE PEACE.'

"BUT AT LAST HE DREW
AWAY, AND TURNED HIS
MIND TO HIS PRESENT
CIRCUMSTANCES."







SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

